Tidbits

- 7-10% US men have sexually compulsive behaviors
- 1 in 10 men have committed date rape
- Internet sex – 1/3rd largest web sector (behind software & computers)
- 200 new sex web sites added every day
- 65 million internet users hit porn sites per month – 19 million exclusively porn users

| Sex Addiction Article | Home |

The Controversy

- Sex is not ingested like chemicals
- Is sex mood altering?
- Craving, Tolerance, Withdrawal?
  - Some say is necessary for “addiction”

Can Sex Become an Addiction?

- Resistance to Label “Addiction”
  - Sex is essential
  - Sex is powerful
  - Sex is natural
- Sexual Behavior Critically Judged
  - “Good” sex
  - “Bad” (perverted) sex

can be addictive – Here's Why

- Behavioral Comparison
  - Gamblers – Respond Same as Cocaine User
  - (MRI) – Behavioral Addiction
  - Drug Use - Brain activity similar to that for sexual arousal
- Endorphin Release & Orgasm
  - Pain killing (Opiate Effects)
- Peptide PEA (characteristic-amphetamines)
  - Possibly interacts with dopamine – increase effect like amphetamines?

Sexual Addiction and the Brain

- Brain Altered
  - Behavior causes habituation (neurological process) and adaptation
  - Neurotransmitters increase/decrease with various activities (related to cellular stress)
  - Done long enough, the neurotransmitters in the brain exist differently, the neuroreceptors adapt to better process increased/decreased levels
  - Synaptic connections become severed in the brain which actually alters cellular make up

A Physiological Addiction?

- Because we know that sexual activity directly impacts how much or how little neurotransmitters are present in the brain
- And because we know that the presence of neurotransmitters can alter how the brain functions
- It is possible to make the connection between sexual behavior and physiological addiction

Addiction

Mimics addictive disorders found in DSM

- **Loss of Control**
  - The desire to stop/cut back, but can't
- **Continuation Despite Adverse Consequences**
  - Physical/Psychological and Legal
- **Obsession or Preoccupation**
  - Great deal of time spent in order to use

Other Explanations

- Hypersexuality & Bipolar
- Hypersexuality & Wellbutrin/Prozac
- Hypersexuality & Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

Demographics & Comorbidity

- 87% sex addicts have family with addictions
- Male – 79%
- Age 33
- Married/Committed Relationships - 53%
- Heterosexual - 63%
- Depression 28% (Males – high DSM 12%)
- Mood Disorders – 70%
- Anxiety Disorders – 50 - 90%
- Chemically Dependent – 42-57%
- Eating Disorders – 38-47.5%
- Multiple Addictions – 83%

Other Common Variables

- Sexual Abuse 81%
- Physical Abuse 72%
- Emotional Abuse 97%

Treating Sex Addiction

- 12 Steps (SA, SLAA)
  - Total abstinence not required
- Psychotherapy (Group seems to be favored)
- Medications
  - Naltrexone (block euphoric feelings)
  - SSRI's (Serotonin inhibits sexual behavior)
  - Rumor of PEA increase/decreasing drug

Resources

- Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S (SIECUS)

  www.siecus.org
- National Council on Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity (NCSAC)

  www.ncsac.org
- Sexual Recovery Institute
  www.sexualrecovery.com
- Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous

  www.slaafws.org

Sex Addict Behaviors
Handout

- Fantasy sex
- Seductive role sex
- Voyeuristic sex
- Exhibitionistic sex
- Paying for sex
- Trading sex
- Intrusive sex
- Anonymous sex
- Pain-exchange sex
- Exploitive sex

These behaviors most often occur in clusters & have similar patterns across multiple behaviors

Other Ways To Look at it? ***Handout***

Masturbates 2x Day	Not necessarily a problem Masturbatory Pattern
Extramarital Affairs	Existential Problem
Wants Partner Sex Daily	Not necessarily a problem Sexual Discrepancy
Enjoys Sadomasochism	Not necessarily a problem; Safe Words
Inappropriate Come-Ons	Socially Inept; Narcissism; Boundary Confusion
Exhibitionism	OCD, Nudists
Wants non-Monogamy	Borderline; Adventurous; Polyamorous
Married / Cruises Bathrooms	Tormented about Sexuality; Closeted
Fetishes	Self Aware; Safe Communities
Commercial Sex	Committed to Marriage; Income Resource
Uses Internet Porn	Depression; Dissatisfied